



Small Projects Day, Section 1: Project Proposal

1. **Line Officer Approval** (Project scope, capacity & timeline) & **Date:** 11/2018
2. **Project Name:** GOSHEN BLUEBERRY MANAGEMENT (RE-OPEN)
3. **Project Location:** GOSHEN, VT
4. **Project Contact:** SUE STAATS & LINDSAY RAE SILVIA
5. **Purpose and Need** (Why here? Why now? Why is the outcome desired?):
Existing blueberry openings in Goshen are an important local resource and draw recreation tourism to the area which benefits the local economy. There has been interest in the community to increase and revitalize blueberry openings, especially those that have not been managed for many years, thus becoming shaded, overgrown, and non-productive. Blueberry openings also provide excellent habitat for wildlife, including pollinators, and should be managed to increase or expand mast productivity where practical (Forest Plan, page 12).
6. **Project Description** (What will we be doing? How will we do it? Where is the project located?):
This project would result in the removal of the hazardous fuels overstory and brush that is shading out the heath/blueberry component, consequently regenerating areas that were once productive low-bush blueberry forage. Overstory wood and brush removal may be accomplished through timber cutting, firewood sales, prescribed fire implementation, or comparable means of removal. Additionally, heavy equipment such as tractor-mowers, masticators, and/or small excavators may be used to meet multiple management objectives.

This proposal encompasses 107 acres of National Forest System land generally referred to as the Goshen Blueberry Management Area consisting of the Flora White and Hogback areas located in Compartment 92, Stands 101, S102, S107, S108, S110 with small sections of S31, S32, S33, S34, S35, S105, and S109. The current area occupied by lowbush blueberry and actively managed for this species using prescribed fire is approximately 15 acres. Historically the blueberry management area consisted of approximately 39 acres of lowbush blueberry.

In order to reclaim the historic acreage occupied by lowbush blueberry and provide for improved management of the area utilizing prescribed fire, 49 acres of proposed vegetation management is planned. The proposed vegetation management includes approximately 8 acres of mastication and 41 acres of harvest of timber, pulpwood, biomass, and sub-merchantable biomass. This activity would occur in areas surrounding and within the existing blueberry management areas to remove hazardous fuels and implement more effective and efficient blueberry management practices. It may include the harvest of portions of current forested stands as well as removal of trees and other woody vegetation that is encroaching on existing areas of lowbush blueberry.

The non-commercial biomass may be extracted may be chipped and mulched on site, and subsequently broadcast burned or pile burned. The skid trails used for removing commercial forest products would be designed so that they may also serve as fire breaks surrounding the blueberry management areas. The areas would be burned semi-annually to improve blueberry production and crews with chainsaws and brush saws may be used to keep the blueberry areas open. This action would result in an increase in the area actively managed for lowbush blueberry to 55 acres. The 52 acres within the project area but not actively managed blueberry areas would serve as fire break and fire lines. Prescribed fire would be authorized within the entire 107-acre project area.



- 7. Forest Plan Management Area:** MOOSALAMOO NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
- 8. Forest Plan Conformance** (How does this project conform to the Forest Land & Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) direction?): This project is part of the Permanent Wildlife Openings. This expansion and revitalization of the Blueberry Management area also provides prime areas for Recreation and Education of these special values and maintain the value of the Moosalamoo Recreation and Education Area (8.9).
- 9. Categorical Exclusion Number and Type:** 36 CFR 220.6 (e)(6): *“Timber stand and/or wildlife habitat improvement activities that do not include the use of herbicides or do not require more than 1 mile of low standard road construction.”*
- 10. Known Resource Conditions / Anticipated Issues** (e.g., topography, water resources/wetlands, wildlife habitat, heritage resources, botany, etc.):
- 11. Expected Implementation Date:** FY2021

